Claim Amendments

Claims 11-12 (canceled).

13. (amended) An optical pickup apparatus [as defined in claim 11], comprising:

a semiconductor laser and at least one light-receiving element formed in a single stem and positioned such that said semiconductor laser emits light ray flux along a first optical path through an objective lens onto an optical recording medium in a form of a small spot to facilitate operation of recording, reproducing and/or erasing of optical information, and such that said at least one light-receiving element receives light from a second optical path that is at least partially different from said first optical path; and

a uniaxial crystal plate having a discontinuous surface and being disposed in said first optical path between said semiconductor laser and the objective lens;

wherein said at least one light-receiving element formed on said stem consists of two pieces of two-divisional light-receiving elements respectively having dividing directions different from each other, and a height of one of said light-receiving elements is the same as a height of said semiconductor laser, while a height of another one of said light-receiving elements is different from said height of said semiconductor laser.

14. (amended) An optical pickup apparatus as defined in claim [11] 13, wherein [a] the uniaxial crystal plate is hermetically sealed unitarily in a package containing said semiconductor laser and said light-receiving element therein.

Claims 29-42 (canceled).

Claims 44-52 (canceled).

53. (new) An optical pickup apparatus as defined in claim 13, further comprising a collimator lens located between the uniaxial crystal plate and the optical recording medium.

54. (new) An optical pickup apparatus as defined in claim 13, wherein an incident plain surface of the uniaxial crystal plate is not perpendicular to the optical axis.

55. (new) An optical pickup apparatus as defined in claim 13, wherein the semiconductor laser, the light-receiving element, the uniaxial crystal plate and the objective lens are mounted unitarily to form a unitary optical pickup portion.

56. (new) An optical pickup apparatus as defined in claim 55, wherein the unitary optical pickup portion is accommodated in an actuator movable portion which can be moved both in a tracking direction and in a focusing direction.

57. (new) An optical pickup apparatus as defined in claim 13, wherein the semiconductor laser, the light-receiving element, the uniaxial crystal plate and the objective lens are accommodated in an actuator movable portion which can be moved both in a tracking direction and in a focusing direction.

58. (new) An optical pickup apparatus as defined in claim 13, wherein the optical disc apparatus is an optical pickup.

59. (new) An optical disc system comprising the optical disc apparatus as defined in claim 13.

60. (new) A method of directing incident light onto an optical recording medium and detecting reflected light therefrom, comprising:

emitting light flux from a light source along an emitting direction;

causing said light flux emitted from said light source in said emitting direction to travel along a first optical path through a uniaxial crystal plate to an objective lens in a form of a small spot to facilitate operation of recording, reproducing and/or erasing of optical information,

said uniaxial crystal plate having a discontinuous surface and being disposed in said first optical path between said light source and the objective lens;

causing light ray flux reflected from the optical recording medium to travel to at least one light-receiving element through said uniaxial crystal plate and along a second optical path that is at least partially different from said first optical path,

wherein said light source and said at least one light-receiving element are formed in a single stem, and

wherein said at least one light-receiving element formed on said stem consists of two pieces of two-divisional light-receiving elements respectively having dividing

directions different from each other, and a height of one of said light-receiving elements is the same as a height of said light source, while a height of another one of said light-receiving elements is different from said height of said light source.